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Editorial.

THE *Unitarian* in its report of the National Conference at Philadelphia, neglects to mention that the Western Unitarian Conference was reported by the secretary, John R. Effinger, among its mention of other reports.

THE *Independent's* (Philadelphia) correspondent says of the National Unitarian Conference: "The leading motive of this meeting was to secure united action upon the South." He was nearer right when he said Rev. J. Clifford "sounded the keynote at the Conference."

WE have a certain sympathy with the Unitarian who does not want to think, and last of all wishes to be compelled to think on Sunday, the day of sacred rest. There are ways of securing this boon within the reach of all. But we have no sympathy with the Unitarian who sets out to prevent other people from thinking—on Sunday or any other day. "Your fathers stoned the prophets, etc."

THERE is a strain as intense, a change as portentous, an anxiety as deep, a crisis as important, going on right here to-day, in the last half of the nineteenth century, as there was in the last half of the sixteenth century. The names of Darwin, Spencer, Sir William Jones, and their associates, suggest another change of the front to the universe that is as destructive to the old theology, as perplexing to the timid guardian of ecclesiastical citadels to-day, as was the change of

thought necessitated by the discoveries of a Copernicus, Kepler and Galileo to the guardians of their day.

WHEN Jonathan Mayhew, of the West Church, Boston, (1747) was ordained, not a Boston minister would attend the ceremony. He was suspected of heresy. His biographer says: "He was the first clergyman in New England who expressly and openly opposed the scholastic doctrine of the trinity."

IT is reported that one of Arch-Deacon Farrar's daughters has been preaching to large audiences in a barn in the South of England. She will probably always have to preach in a barn in lieu of finding admission to any church of that denomination which her father has labored so hard to emancipate and enlighten.

SINCE the National Conference has been shut out of the Methodist Church of Saratoga, if it will hold its next session in Chicago, the Western Conference will do what it can to secure for it the First Methodist Church of that city. It may be that the National Conference has now grown so much more heretical than the Western Conference as to make this a somewhat delicate matter.

WORD reaches us as we go to press of the sudden death of Prof. William F. Allen, at his home in Madison, Wis., last Monday. Tuesday of last week he was attacked with pneumonia, and the fatal outcome is a terrible surprise to his many friends. Prof. Allen was a typical American scholar, uniformly accurate, modest in his statements, thoughtful and conscientious in his work with the many young men and women who shared in his training at the University of Wisconsin. To the cause of rational religion in the West he was a faithful and helpful friend, and his loss leaves a gap in our circle not soon to be filled.

IS it not a cardinal principle of just criticism that the party criticised, whether it be a man or an organization, should be allowed to state his own meaning and interpret his own position? With its persistent habit of ignoring this canon, the *Unitarian* for December contains its characteristic amount of misinterpretations and misrepresentation concerning the Western Unitarian Conference. If, once in a while, it would print the offending resolutions and affirmations, adopted by the Conference in 1887, in Chicago, its readers would be better able to judge for themselves.

THE *Unitarian* for December calls upon *UNITY* to correct a "misunderstanding," caused by its saying that the Women's Western Conference and the Western Unitarian Sunday-school Society were to be represented by their officers in the proposed advisory council, to be made up of the various missionary organizations in the West. It objects to the Women's Conference and the Sunday-school Society, and to maintain this objection it has "taken pains to ascertain the intention of the man with whom the idea originated." And he also speaks for the committee who had it under consideration. The deliberations of bodies are not interpreted by such occult measures, but by open utterances on the floor of the convention itself. The memory of those who were present at the convention will promptly recall that Dr. Robbins, a delegate from Quincy, asked in open convention, with a voice not easily mis-

understood, if it was clearly understood that this alliance was to recognize representatives in the above three bodies, whereupon Mr. Crooker, the chairman of the committee who reported the plan, and had the floor at the time, promptly replied with equally clear tone and an emphatic wave of the hand, "everything that does missionary work within the West." If this council is to start out by ignoring the faithful and far-reaching work of the women, and the fundamental, patient and very important work of the Sunday-school Society, it proves beyond a doubt that what many suspected is true, that the object of this combination in the minds of many, is not primarily a missionary one, but a strategic movement to circumvent the work and influence of the activities that center around the headquarters at 175 Dearborn street.

THE electric rate at which great problems are solved in religious assemblies was illustrated afresh at the church congress held in Wales. The London *Times* says: "At Cardiff, as everywhere else, each day has had questions to discuss and determine which would have afforded enough intellectual employment for the whole meeting. The great problems of church and state had to be settled in two hours and a half, and elementary education in three. In two hours and a half the President of the Royal Society, the Head Master of Clifton College, Mr. W. L. Courtney, Mr. H. C. Shuttleworth, Mrs. Laffan and others, were set the task of deciding the relation of science and evolution, fiction and literature in general, to religion and to the working classes. No more time could be allowed for an exposition by Canons and Deans of the prerogatives of the Christian ministry, of the importance and limits, if any, of Sunday observance, and of the spiritual needs of young men. One among a score of subjects was the Christian's relationship to God, the church and the world. Imagination recoils before the enterprise of condensing the immensity into three short hours." Fortunately for a Unitarian Conference, many of the subjects which seem vital to an Episcopalian assembly do not rise, or have been long since decided. But it may well be considered if a less number of topics, with more time to discuss them, would not result in greater clearness and unanimity of conviction, and more effective methods of administration.

THE story is told of Newton (and of others since his day), that having two cats, a large and a small one, he ordered the carpenter to cut two holes for their ingress and egress, corresponding to the size of each, not seeing that the larger hole would accommodate both. Now we say of Newton that though he was a profound philosopher, in this he lacked common sense. And yet the case finds a parallel, as it seems to us, in those who say that they cannot go into an organization where the door of entrance is not cut down to exactly their size. Of course if it be too narrow, they are excluded, or they can only by some process of wriggling get through. But why they should be angry, or consider themselves shut out because the opening is a little bigger than they individually need, is not so easy to understand. Nevertheless, this state of mind has always been noticeable whenever in religious communions there has been any attempt to broaden the form of faith or the terms of fellowship. If big cats could in any possible way

worm themselves through the small hole, they were welcome; that somehow seemed to reduce them to the size or the level of the small cats. But to have one passage, and that passage large enough comfortably to admit both kinds of cats, that has been the dread of all ecclesiastical systems. At the same time the process goes steadily on of broadening the portals of admission to the institutions of religion and to the privileges of equal worship. The number of essential beliefs grows less. Orthodoxy counts for little. More and more it is coming to be held that the church stands for growing character, rather than for declining creed. Theology is important—let each man follow the best light he has; but no system ever yet devised, not even our own, is so important as truth, righteousness and love, cherished in the heart and exercised in the daily life.

"A BRIGHTENING OUTLOOK."

This is the title of an article in the December *Unitarian*, in which the editor begins to see an end to the Western Conference heresy, now that both National bodies have definitely set their faces against the Conference, if we rightly understand the not very clear sentences. It is unquestionably true that the existing governing boards of both National bodies have not spared and are not likely to spare any pains in ignoring and destroying the influence of the Western Conference. In this fact we too see signs of the "Brightening Outlook." We spoke last week of the demand for a more definite explanation of the situation by the congregation of All Souls Church, Chicago. At the evening meeting alluded to, although not a large one, upwards of \$300 was promptly subscribed, and the meeting demanded of the minister that on the following Sunday he should preach a short sermon and that the larger congregation be informed of what was done and what needed to be done. At the close of the sermon last Sunday, Dr. Shears, the chairman of the Board of Trustees, to whose courage, earnestness and candor the whole movement should be credited, took charge of the meeting. There were various spontaneous expressions from the pews, and in less than twenty minutes the subscription to meet the current expenses of the Western Conference of this year was run up to \$650. This is probably the largest sum ever subscribed by any church in Chicago to the Western Conference in one year, although other congregations represent millions where this congregation represents thousands. There were two fifty dollar subscriptions, a few twenty-five dollar, but the bulk of it came in small subscriptions of \$10 and \$5 and fewer dollars. It came gladly, triumphantly, from transient attendants as well as regular members; visitors from our churches in Wisconsin, Iowa, and the Church of the Messiah were anxious to be counted in. This shows what the friends of a non-doctrinal religious fellowship mean to do when it is fairly understood that there is a systematic attempt to chill such a movement out of existence. It shows what our laymen and laywomen are capable of when they are trusted by their too faithless ministers. We hope that this response is but the beginning of a spontaneous outpouring of funds from those who believe that Truth, Righteousness and Love are diviner conditions of religious fellowship than any words of theology or intellectual conclusions.

Ministers and members of the Unitarian churches in the Mississippi valley! We are frequently told in these days that you are not interested in this form of religion and that when you understand it in its full bearing, you will promptly withdraw what support you have given to the Western Conference. Is it true? There is but one way of refuting the charge, by proving your faith by your works.

You ministers who have had personal confidence in the position of the Western Conference and have hoped and expected its triumph, but have been afraid or ashamed to lay the problems of a "quarrel (?) before your people! Can you much longer be fair by your congregation or just to yourself by ignoring an unquestioned, great and pressing issue? It is not a question in Unitarian politics, it is a question asked by the cultivated world. "Is it possible to have a church where heresy hunting is an impossibility and where exclusion for thought's sake will not be thought of? A church where the Jew and Ethical culturist, the Agnostic and the aspiring Episcopalian and Catholic may be welcome. A church that has such faith in God and spirit that it can leave them to the inevitable and sweeping gravitation that follow truth, righteousness and love?"

There comes a time "when he who is not for me is against me;" the time to confess your Master is when he is on the cross. Plenty of people to exchange with Theodore Parker after he was dead, only James Freeman Clarke, Mr. Sargent and a very few others while he was with them; to these be gratitude and praise.

We appeal also to the unconnected *UNITY* readers, those who have no church to drain their resources or to pass on their subscriptions. If you are friendly to this struggle it is possible for you to "bear your testimony." Send in your subscription, great or small, it will all help. Mr. Galloway, the ex-treasurer of the Western Conference, a member of a neighboring parish, started the subscription at All Souls Church, the other night, to prove that individuals had more conscience than societies. He urged that we should appeal more directly to individuals, and ventured the opinion that there were seventy people within the limits of the W. U. C. who could and would believe in the cause of this Conference to the extent of \$50 annual subscription, were they sought and the matter duly explained, and this would meet the present demand of the Conference. Seventy is an apostolic number, who wants to be counted in? None the less responsible for this much misinterpreted cause are those who must stand up and be counted for smaller sums. An isolated subscriber in Wisconsin stepped into *UNITY* office the other day to say to the senior editor, "Hold on to your position; I have watched this matter closely, you have a case, and it must win." They were welcome words and they rang encouragement in the ears for a long time. Now, if such friends like to stand in with us in our extremity and *help us win the case*, there is now a golden opportunity. In sending in your subscription be careful to indicate whether it is for current expenses or for the permanent Endowment Fund. Both are in need of help. If there is a "brightening outlook," we must kindle the lamps. Let not Providence be trusted by him who will not help. That the cause is so persistently challenged is proof that it needs friends and is not yet triumphant.

FAITH IN THE PEOPLE.

A clergyman of some prominence in his own city recently expressed among a few friends the opinion that ministers, as a class, are marked by the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial beyond other men; but that he did not find them, as a class, distinguished by courage or boldness of conviction and its expression,—that in this regard indeed they seemed to him to be lacking beyond other men of the same intelligence.

The opinion interested us as that of a minister, himself a churchman, upon those of his own calling. It calls to mind also a criticism often passed upon the pulpit in these days of changing beliefs, namely, the charge of insincerity; that many in the pulpit, if not saying what they really do not believe, are at least not saying all that they honestly do think and believe. Both these judgments are directed to that aspect of conservatism which marks the average pulpit of our time, a conservatism shown in the continued use of forms and phraseology from which the old-time meaning and life have vanished, and in silence or evasion and circumlocution as to many things that lie clear in the preacher's own field of vision. We leave our readers to judge as to the justice or injustice of both criticisms. That there is cowardice in the pulpit we can not deny; but what we want now to say is that cowardice is not the only root, nor in our opinion the main root, of this alleged failure of the pulpit to voice its full convictions and beliefs. At least it is not the cowardice that springs from the considerations of selfish interest and fear. What is it then? It is the lack of faith in the people, in the popular mind and heart. In many a preacher this may be very closely allied with personal cowardice, but the two are separable in our thought. We heard not long ago of a remark by a certain minister to this effect: "Yes, I think so and so, under those circumstances; but then it would not do for me to preach that from my pulpit." The remark as quoted to us seemed to us at the time to brand that minister as a coward, and something indeed a little worse than a coward. In thinking further upon the matter, however, we came to feel that it was not really for consequences to himself that this minister could not speak in his pulpit as he had spoken in private. He probably did not feel that it would bring opprobrium upon him, or lose him his place, or raise any opposition which he personally could not meet and overcome. We do not think it would have done so. It was less from personal fear than from lack of faith in his people that he was adopting this policy of silence. He hesitated to loosen the links of that theological system in which his people for the most part had been trained. To some it might be without peril; but to many it would be the disturbing of their supposed faith. He did not dare to set them thinking for themselves, apart from standards long accepted and held as authoritative. So at least one who knew the man explained his remarks to us,—one who shared neither his policy of silence nor his fear, and had little respect for either. There are many ministers today who say in substance—have we not all heard this talk?—"It is quite safe for the more intelligent and cultivated people to discuss these questions of faith and belief, but the mass of the people are not prepared for this. It is better for them to abide in an authoritative and dogmatic faith. It is dangerous to disturb the grounds on which they have rested their inherited beliefs. You and I, perhaps, do not need an infallible bible. We do not need miracles to confirm the moral and spiritual realities that shore up our lives and make the truth its own authority. But the mass of the people do need these things." Such talk is common; and however weak it may be, it is not insincere. It comes of lack of faith in human nature in the large. It presupposes that Hans and Bridget are made of flesh and blood different from our own; that they have not minds and hearts like ourselves; that truth is not related to their character and conduct as it is to our own; that what helps to the enlargement of our own life cannot help to the enlargement of theirs. It is really the worst want of faith, faith in Man. All our faith-structure must rest at last on this, faith in human faculty, in Man; in his capacity to know truth and to live from it and by it. And, as matter of fact, while there are many grades of culture

in society, native intelligence and mother-wit are more common through the ranks than these timid and cautious preachers are apt to think. These are not carrying the faith of the mass of the people in their pockets so much as they suppose. It will do for them to speak out. That is what the *people* really want them to do. The average man can distinguish between the utterance of conviction and that of convention. To tell his vision is the prophet's mission. That was a fine and characteristic reply of Wendell Phillips when, in one of his addresses wherein he was reviewing the wrongs of society, some one in the audience called out—"Well, how are you going to help it?"—he answered with that readiness which always marked the man upon the platform: "In the same way that Christianity mounted the throne of the Cæsars; by telling the truth that is given me to see, and not only the half of it!" That is the way of the prophets in all ages. But this implies faith in human nature in the large to rise to the vision of the truth, and to realize it in the individual and social life. It means a democracy of mind and heart that shall take us out of our small circle of self-complacent aristocracy and throw us in brave and loving confidence upon the great common life of the world. It means faith in the people, out of which Jesus spoke and out of which has been born every great movement, in Church and State, that has carried forward the interests and hopes of humanity.

F. L. H.

A "SAY-SO" RELIGION.

The assumption constantly made by Mr. Sunderland in *The Unitarian*, that the Western Conference either in its membership or in its aims is "anti-theistic," "anti-Christian," or "agnostic" (if this last means any attempt to base ethics or religion on the Unknown-
knowable) is a mistaken one.

The story is told that at a public dinner an orthodox clergyman was seriously disaffected because no grace was said. Dr. Bartol, who sat near, told him he thought "some things might be taken for granted."

Now, although the words "God," and "Christ," and "worship," and "immortality," and "reverence," and "pure Christianity," and "theism," and other terms much talked about, are not in the Constitution of the Western Conference, which is a purely business instrument, and which Mr. Sunderland voted for in exactly its present shape, when adopted in 1882, nevertheless, it does not follow that all these conceptions are repudiated.

The editor of *The Unitarian* should have more faith. Certainly some of these things can be taken for granted. Nor will it occur to any who are in the habit of reading *UNITY*, that it is managed by or in the special interest of atheists or agnostics. Not one of its editors belongs to that school of philosophy.

"Well,"—we seem to hear the question retorted which we have heard before—"why don't you *say so* then?" and we reply: "All this has been constantly said to those who had ears to hear, in sermon and in song, and in weekly comment in these pages, and for all these years. But to "say so" in a set formula, to be incorporated into a business organization, is of no more use than the terms "God" and "Christ" would be in the constitution of the United States.

Besides, the "say so" religions, that trust to pious phrases and formulas for their authority or their existence, are falling into discredit. Orthodoxy couldn't trust anybody to have a religion unless he "said so." And he must "say so" in precisely the words duly approved. Now orthodoxy finds those words long used dead, and is trying to get rid of them, or exchange them for something which for the time, at least, is alive.

But there is no way of taking the life out of words, of killing them for all rational use, so effectually, as putting them into formulas and creeds, or

into places where they do not belong, and then making everybody use them or agree to them, whether they see any sense in them or not. This plan gives us a "say so" religion, and in the end that is about all there is of it. And to use the greatest words of faith and aspiration in this way, words which are ever expanding under new accessions of thought, is perhaps least desirable. A "say so" religion soon ceases to demand more than lip-service where only the attainment of a spiritual experience is of any value whatever.

Contributed and Selected.

AT THE GRAVE.

It is a world of seeming:
The changeless moon seems changing ever;
The sun sets daily but sets never;
So near the stars and yet so far,
So small they seem, so large they are—
It is a world of seeming.

And so it seems that she is dead:
Yet so seems only; for, instead,
Her life is just begun; and this—
Is but an empty chrysalis,
While she, unseen to mortal eyes,
Now wins her way in brighter skies

Beyond this world of seeming.
—Henry Ames Blood.

THE ADAPTABILITY OF THE LIBERAL FAITH TO THE WORKING PEOPLE.

AN ADDRESS READ AT THE PACIFIC UNITARIAN CONFERENCE, PORTLAND, ORE., BY ALEXANDER JOHNSON.

Some ten years ago, in a city of the middle States, a mechanic who worked ten hours each day at a very laborious occupation, happened one bright October Sunday to stray for the first time in his life into a Unitarian Church. He heard a sermon from the text, "Here we have no continuing city." The preacher described in the most sympathetic manner the landing of a party of immigrants in a new country, among strange names, languages and surroundings, their confusion and bewilderment, their slow and laborious adaptation to the new environment, their homesickness and vain regrets, their gradual gain of self-possession and hope for the future. The mechanic of whom I speak was himself an immigrant and knew, at least by witnessing, if not by enduring, the faithfulness of the picture. Then the preacher spoke of mental pilgrimages and described the quest of new truth as the old half truths fail to satisfy the awakened intellect, and again the man listened and felt the truth of every word. Then the minister dwelt upon the spiritual wanderings of one whose eyes are opened to the errors of the creed of his childhood and youth. How, when first he finds he was "suckled on a creed outworn," he wanders, seeking rest and finding none; how hard it is to satisfy the hungry soul which cannot feed on husks and pretend they are kernels of good grain; how he regrets the loss of the spiritual home of his childhood and sometimes yearns for the old peace and comfort, even if it were the peace of ignorance and the comfort of superstition; how he goes from place to place, called by a "Lo here" or "Lo there," and wanders long in a dreary wilderness of doubt. And again every word and tone were true and revealed to the eager listener his own inmost thought.

Then this preacher, in calm and earnest tone, with convincing sincerity and irrefutable logic, told of a reasonable religion, a faith of reason, in which, while a man's head is kept free from mental fog, and he is asked to believe nothing on mere hearsay, least of all the hearsay of men who lived 2,000 or 4,000 years ago, his heart is nourished by a stream of emotion, he is given an incentive to and a sanction of duty that make life a joyous and hopeful possession. And the man listened and heard for the first time in his life that you may be a Christian and a church man and not surrender your intellectual freedom,—that there is a church with fellowship, with worship,—with religion of the heart and life, of whose membership character is

the only test, and intellectual assent to creed is not so much as mentioned.

Is it any wonder that the mechanic became a member of the church, and that after he had done so, he hoped and believed and labored to make actual the possibility of bringing in many others like himself—those whom he knew were thoughtful and earnest men? Most of them perhaps had fewer opportunities than he had enjoyed in early life,—for though he had left school at twelve, he had lived in a city where educational facilities for boys and men who labor are perhaps unequalled in the world; but many of them with taste for reading, acute minds trained by contact with things as well as with men,—all of them with a contempt for affectation, a love of sincerity and a deep, though often mistaken, sense of right and wrong.

Dear friends, the mechanic and the preacher of my story are here together to-night. The city was Cincinnati, the minister was your and my dearly loved Wendte, the mechanic was he who now addresses you. Do you wonder that I said to Dr. Eliot on Sunday that if I spoke at the Conference the subject of my choice would be the adaptation of the Liberal Faith to working people.

When I speak of the working people of our country I have rather in mind our skilled mechanics than the bulk of our laborers, most of whom at present are immigrants, and immigrants, too, who have come to us at mature age. I confess that for this latter class I have small hope from the liberal faith; they are mostly immersed in stolid and dense ignorance, hardly broken by any reading; their pleasures and their ambitions are of a wholly sensuous and gross nature; their habitations in most of our large cities are among surroundings that cannot but deaden and destroy any love of nature, of beauty, if the faint spring of such love were ever in their breasts. Ugly, dull, unlovely are the streets and the houses they inhabit; dull and ugly their clothing, their rooms, their food. Their very pleasure-places, their beer halls, etc., are ugly and colorless. We have dense masses of such houses, streets and people in all of our large cities, and the thought of them and of their life weighs on me sometimes like a nightmare. Perhaps it will be long before we can reach them. We may have to build towards them through classes somewhat nearer us. Possibly the Catholic Church, which appeals to the soul through so many avenues of sense, music, paintings, incense, etc., may be the best adapted for these. I think it fortunate for our civilization that so many of the more ignorant foreigners are under the dominion of the Priest. He keeps them near to decency and sternly reprobates crime and anarchy.

But those who ought to be and I think may be brought into our fellowship, and in whom I am specially interested, are of a class above the day laborer.

Since education has made such progress and every laborer's sons and daughters have the High School open to them, we find culture spreading among all grades and particularly among mechanics. Beside there is a certain education that is not confined to the fingers, in the learning of a trade. This fact has been emphasized lately by the establishment of manual training schools, whose object is not to teach trades but to educate the whole man, to reach the brain through the fingers as well as through the eyes.

The skilled mechanic is accustomed to the logical processes of nature. A *non sequitur* in carpentry is even more apparent than in logical discourse. The tinner learns the laws of social economy and metallurgy as he plies his trade. The mason comprehends the necessity of strong foundations and upright lines fully as well as the civil engineer or the architect. These men have had then some, at least, of the culture that makes the mind ready for the reception of broad truth. Their daily work has taught them to beware of insufficient

premises, to doubt bare assertions, to found their actions only on ground they can demonstrate as sound. When to them you offer a religion whose central thought is not only self-evident but is one of which the negation is inconceivable—that we live in the presence of a power, not ourselves nor of our making, that makes for rightness, straightness, they cannot but accept it, for their every day's work preaches them the same great truth.

When you offer them a sanction of duty—an incentive to right living whose truth can be demonstrated every day, "Righteousness tendeth to life," "It is joy to the just to do judgment," "If ye hear my words happy are ye if ye do them," how natural that they should accept it gladly and demonstrate to themselves the truth of this religion by simply trying the experiment of living by it.

I hold that to such men as I have hinted at, the Liberal Faith needs only to be offered aright to be accepted. Whether it is afterwards lived up to, depends on other things. The question is how to reach them. The importance of reaching these men, the leaders of the masses, the thinkers and organizers among the vast body whose votes can control the destiny of the nation because more than the votes of any other class they can be influenced in large masses, can scarcely be over-estimated.

It seems to me that to reach these workers of our country, to interest them in liberal religion and to get them in large numbers into our churches as active members, is entirely within our power and is a most desirable object of effort.

I have met with a certain kind of Unitarians who do not agree with the views I express. They think, and they are rather solaced and uplifted by the thought, that Unitarianism is a religion, suitable and only suitable for the cultured, and they confuse culture and refinement—two things which although they often go together are by no means inseparable. These good people look upon their church, as primarily a place around which clusters a charming society of which they are ornaments—and secondarily as a place for a little intellectual and spiritual quickening for ninety minutes on the first day of the week during ten months of the year. To them the great advantage of the primal need of culture before you can appreciate the Unitarian faith, is that it keeps society select. And of course if society is what Thackeray calls it, the great matrimonial exchange, the more select, the fewer ineligible and the better it serves its purpose.

I am devoutly glad to say that I believe such Unitarians are in the minority, but there are some of them I think, in most churches, and they often wield far more than their fair share of influence. I take it such narrow views are not held here to-day, but that they are held, and held so as to offset and thwart certain efforts in the direction I have indicated, is only too true and has been felt with some bitterness by more than one enthusiast like myself.

As I say, however, I believe you will agree with me as to the desirability of securing recruits from the class I have described. The question then is why don't we get them now? Our churches are open, our subjects of discourse are advertised in the newspapers. We make every one welcome. And I am happy to say that in many of our churches we find some working people, although the multitude are of the business and professional classes. Dear friends, these people are sensitive and proud. They

will not come in with us if we patronize them ever so little, they must come on terms of equality or not at all. To get them in we must go out. We must make the church attractive, bring in the floating population perhaps only to retain a few.

I believe we might do much by popular lectures, especially on Sunday evenings, in some large hall down town, lectures designed to attract and which should serve as advertisements of our church and Sunday-school.

At these lectures we should make it very plain that we are for and of the people. We should take social topics, "Looking Backward" for instance, or "The Children of Gibeon," an even more helpful novel. The attendants should be invited to our church, our Sunday school and our Unity Club.

The Unity Club is however, in my opinion, the best means of laying hold on the masses who need our truth and do not know they need it. Many people will come to a week night essay, debate, concert, or amateur dramatic performance who will not at first come to church. The club should be very inclusive, membership should be given on a small payment to any decent person applying. It should be very democratic. Nothing attracts the masses like their seeing one of their own number occupying an influential position. The control should be carefully held by the Trustees of the church, which can be done by making the pastor ex-officio of the executive committee and by the church members taking leading parts as officers and chairmen of committees,

There are in all our large cities numbers of young men and women, mechanics, clerks, etc., who have left home for a city life. Many of them have dropped out of church connection, ties which at home, reinforced by family ties, were strong enough to keep them in attendance—away are too weak and they leave off going to church. Many of them are bright and with some culture. Ingersoll and others of his kind may have caught them. They are wandering sheep from all kinds of folds. If we have a mission to any one it is surely to such as they. And by the Unity Club and the Sunday lecture we are most likely to reach them.

Dear friends, we must be aggressive and we must be willing to give up some of the pleasant things that surround our quiet, exclusive, cultured church societies, for the sake of the influence we can exert on these numerous people who need so sorely the bread of life which we have to give if we will only be faithful to the great trust given us. And when we get these people we must set them to work. There is not a charitable society which would not be benefited by having a few mechanics and their wives upon its board of directors. The Charity Organization Society of London has recognized this and is now placing upon each of its district boards a few workingmen, with marked success. When during the distress of last winter, but one, the Mansion House Fund, was being handled by the C. O. S. in London, numerous attacks were made by labor societies on the methods pursued. The societies were invited to send delegations to the committee meetings and they were there received by workingmen on the committees who met their criticisms with a force and promptness that no other members of the committee could put forth. Such new members would be especially valuable in our charity work, although my experience with them has been that, toilers themselves, they have less pity for the unfortunate lazy people than have those who do not work so hard.

Of course poor people cannot help us financially; it is not from them that we can secure thousands to endow colleges. But they will all contribute a share towards church expenses, and there are few of our churches which would not be very prosperous were every seat filled by a subscriber of a small but regular amount.

I hope to live to see a Unitarian church, the bulk of whose membership shall be of working people. I fancy it will be a useful and progressive church. I can imagine one such set down as a mission enterprise from one of our wealthy city churches, in the midst of a poor neighborhood, with a young man or young woman as pastor whose heart is on fire with love of humanity, who preaches as Jesus would preach in a city slum to-day, the gospel of the life that now is, the gospel of cleanliness and order and right living and

thrift. I can fancy its week evening meetings, its library and reading room, its concerts and singing classes, its sewing and cutting classes for girls and for mothers. I can fancy its penny savings bank, its dime building association, its amusement hall, and gymnasium, its debating society and its old man's quiet corner. I can imagine such a church renewing and recreating the life of a neighborhood, banishing the saloon by dint of successful opposition, showing like a lamp set in a dark place, blessing them who come into its light.

I can fancy the contagion spreading until other churches copied its methods and spreading still until there shall be no dark places in our large cities fit for the habitations of cruelty.

Is the dream too bright, too far off from possibility? Dear friends, dreams of fair things are prophesies of things still fairer. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." The great travel of society towards equal rights and better times towards the uplifting of the down-trodden, the help of the poor and the sorrowful, means something. "God is not mocked." The day of gladness is coming; we shall see it if we help it forward.

Correspondence.

EDITOR OF UNITY:—As one means of modifying the judgment, and softening the feeling of some of our brethren, ought you not to keep before our people the fact that the working basis of the National Conference and the Western Conference are, after all, *practically the same*. You may have shown this repeatedly, but, if so, I have either not noticed, or forgotten it. I submit therefore the following brief comparative analysis of the two platforms:

I. The National Conference places itself before the world in this way—

1. It affirms in the preamble and leading articles of its constitution its general religious basis, or, as runs the favorite phrase of some, "what it stands for."

2. It expresses a belief "that the preamble and articles of the constitution represent the opinions of the majority of our churches."

3. It wishes "distinctly to put on record that they (the preamble and articles) are no authoritative test of Unitarianism."

4. They are "not intended to exclude from our fellowship any who, while differing from us in belief, are in general sympathy with our purposes and aims."

II. The Western Conference has the same platform, only in a reversed order, thus—

1. It welcomes to its fellowship "all who wish to join us to help establish truth, righteousness and love in the world"—its practical aim.

2. It declares that "we have no creed which we impose as a test of fellowship."

3. Yet "we have doctrinal beliefs, and for the most part hold such beliefs in common."

4. Last of all it offers one of many "specific statements of belief which abound among us."

Now, I submit that it would puzzle even a "Philadelphia lawyer" to explain how these two platforms essentially differ. They both set forth what the Unitarian churches "stand for" in general—the Western Conference even more fully and explicitly than the National. Both admit that they speak only for the majority. Both state that their affirmations of belief are not intended as tests for fellowship. Both welcome all who, though differing in belief, will work for the practical results which are aimed at. If one has turned away from Jesus, denied God, and opened its doors to the infidel and the atheist, so has the other. Since they are so much alike, why not have peace?

EDWARD B. PAYNE.

LEOMINSTER, MASS.
GRATITUDE is the music of the heart when its chords are swept by kindness.

Church-Pulpit.

Any church may secure the publication of any acceptable sermon in this department by the payment of \$5, which sum will entitle the church to one hundred copies of the issue in which the sermon is printed.

A DEFENSE OF SKEPTICISM.
A SERMON PREACHED AT UNITY CHURCH,
HINSDALE, ILLS., NOV. 24, 1889, BY
REV. H. T. ROOT.

Published by the Congregation.

"Prove all things."—I. Thess. v. 21.

In the will of the late John Crerar of Chicago, was a clause regarding his munificent benefaction of a public library in which occurs this language: "I desire * * * * * that all nastiness and immorality be excluded. * * * * I mean that dirty French novels, and all skeptical trash, and works of questionable moral tone shall never be found in this library." I quote this on account of the expression "skeptical trash."

It is not so very surprising that so old a man as this testator was when the will was drawn, having gotten his religious ideas, probably, in boyhood, having been engaged in business pursuits during his life, and being, furthermore, a Presbyterian, should have feared the demoralizing tendencies of skeptical works; nor need we wonder that, being a Scotchman, he expressed himself in positive terms. We must allow a Scotchman to do good in his own way, and will pardon the words "nastiness," "dirty," and "trash," even in so grave an instrument as a last will and testament, when the gift is so generous, and for so laudable an object. The Scotch intensity of conviction doubtless forbade the use of gentler words to characterize things which his soul abhorred, and his religious training gave an intense reality to these particular specters. Nor do I allude to Scotch traits with disrespect, nor to Presbyterian godliness and morality sneeringly. Long may it be before I forget the debts which the world owes both to the one and the other. I have too much good old Scotch Presbyterian blood in my own veins for that. Prick me beneath the skin, and, I doubt not, you shall come upon not a little Scotch dogmatism, and Scotch doggedness, and I hope I am not wholly wanting in that vein of logic which was such a power with Calvin and with Edwards, though some of my premises are slightly different from theirs.

In fact our premises are about as opposite as premises can be; for they believed in a fall of man, and I believe in his rise. They believed that, left to himself, man tended inevitably downward; he could rise only by extranatural, divine grace. I believe that divine grace is a part of man's endowment, and cannot be separated from his other natural endowments. As Mr. Gannett puts it in his hymn:

"We find Him not by seeking long,
We lose Him not unsought."

I own, however, that, for myself, I was surprised, when the editors of several of the leading Chicago dailies singled out for special editorial mention and approval that paragraph of John Crerar's will which contains the clause I have quoted, "skeptical trash" and all. It shows that the educators of the people themselves need educating. Are these the men who are seeking to guide us on free trade and protection, prohibition and high-license, and who so confidently settle for us all our other social questions? But it is all of a piece. They have too much to do to be other than superficial; too little time to go beneath the surface. (That is my Scotch way of putting it.)

One editor was indeed taken to task by a correspondent who wanted to know whether the new library would be destitute of the best encyclopædias, which are certainly somewhat open to the charge of having skeptical articles in them, at least from the presumed standpoint of Mr. Crerar; and who was also anxious to know if the shelves would be empty in the places where Huxley,

Tyndall, Spencer, and other modern scientists are usually found.

The editor (perhaps, in his editorial, he had supposed himself catering to his religious readers) appeared to see a difficulty, and threw the burden off upon the trustees named in the will, saying that they were broad-minded men, and would doubtless administer the trust judiciously.

But let us see. What is the question which will confront the trustees here? What is "skeptical trash?" Shall we emphasize the word "trash," and say "skeptical trash?" Granted that some skeptical works are trashy. So, too, are many very orthodox works, and, really, I think, a far greater proportion of them. Let us suppose Dr. McPherson, who is one of the library trustees, and who is a good Presbyterian, and whom I know to be a man of more than ordinary mental caliber, as he was the valedictorian of my class in college, with this problem before him, the determining what was meant by this phrase. Would Mr. Crerar favor trashy works not skeptical? He could not say that of his former parishioner. Why then did he specify "skeptical trash?" Simply that he meant to put the emphasis on "skeptical," and the word "trash" was added to express his abhorrence of skeptical works, just as he uses the word "dirty" to characterize certain French novels. If he simply meant to exclude "trash," why add the word "skeptical," and if he wished to exclude only a certain kind of skeptical works, why did he not say (granting him the ordinary knowledge in the use of language) the trashy kind of skeptical works? This, I think, is good Presbyterian logic. The testator evidently meant works considered skeptical from his own religious standpoint.

It will be hard to draw the line, and harder yet, as the years roll by, and thought changes and becomes more liberal, to carry out the testator's wishes on this point. The old legal doctrine known as the *cypres* doctrine, or doctrine of approximation, will have to come into play, if this clause of the will is given any effect. This doctrine was, that, if it was impossible to carry out the intention of a testator literally, the executors should come as near to it as possible. This clause will probably be about as operative as the one in Stephen Girard's will which provided that no minister of the gospel should be allowed in the grounds of Girard College.

But it was neither to preach against editors and public opinion, nor to show the absurdity of attempting to foist our heated opinions on the coming age by impracticable testamentary provisions, that I have called attention to this provision in the will of the dead millionaire. I have done it for the purpose of defending Skepticism. I object to the word "trash" as used in this connection; i.e., any such Homeric use of the adjective as the testator evidently intended.

What is Skepticism? The word is of Greek origin. The Greek noun *skepsis* primarily meant a viewing, *perception by the senses*, secondarily, *examination, inquiry; consideration, reflection*. A derivative sense of it was *hesitation, doubt*, as applied particularly to the Phrynnic philosophers. We can see how this transition may very naturally have taken place. A sect of thinkers plant themselves on the knowledge given by the senses. If they stopped there, it implied a *doubt* of things not given by the senses. Hence one not in sympathy with them would, in using the word to denote them, have in mind their *doubt*, which was a corollary from their creed. The Greek adjective meant *thoughtful, inclined to reflection*, and, as applied to the school I have mentioned, came to mean those who doubted all things. As used in English there is not a wide departure from the Greek original. Richardson says a skeptic is one "who can, or may seek, or search;" "one who is ever seeking, and never finds." As generally used, it is applied to thinkers who,

on reflection, *doubt*. It never has been synonymous with *infidel*, or *disbeliever*, and has never been confounded with these words, unless by those ignorant of the proper use and meaning of these terms.

Now, in my defense of skeptics and skepticism, I care not to be over nice as to the proper signification of these words. I am no great purist in the use of terms. I am not delivering a discourse to contend for restricting the word *skeptic* to its primary signification. I wish to indulge in no verbal quibbles. I am willing to take the word in its common acceptation. I am even willing to take Richardson's definition of skeptic as one who is ever seeking and never finds, if, by "finds," he means that he becomes certain of anything which does not rest upon irrefragable evidence; if, by his phrase, he means one who, when he finds one thing, pushes on to another, never resting; if, finally, he means one who believes in the relativity of all human knowledge, that nothing appears to us in its absolute significance, that nothing can be known to us as it is to the divine mind; if he means by skeptic one who believes with the poet that, if we could know in its entirety, fully and completely know, the "flower in the crannied wall," we should know the universe, and who believes, that because we do not know the universe, we do not know the "flower in the crannied wall," "the yellow primrose by the river's bank;" even then I have no quarrel with him, for even in that broad sense, I am myself a skeptic.

I mean, by a defense of skepticism, a defense of the doubter and the doubt. I mean that skepticism is an eminently respectable thing. It may appear, from what follows, that it is much more than merely respectable. For your true truthseeker must doubt. He may begin by doubting and thus come to further truth; or he may get a glimpse of broader truth and so come to doubt the old. Thought and doubt go hand in hand, and the world owes much to skepticism.

When Thales of Miletus discovered that amber rubbed with silk would attract to it straw and pith and other light substances, and after a little again repel them, he said the phenomena were caused by a spirit residing in the amber, who was disturbed by the friction applied to his abode, and in his anger rushed out to see who had thus rudely disturbed his repose. He caught the first thing at hand, rapidly took it back to the amber, questioned it, and becoming satisfied that he had caught the wrong one threw it away again. Thales himself was a skeptic in the old sense, for he *reasoned and reflected* on the phenomena for which others had only stupid wonder and amazement. But, in time, came the skeptics who doubted of the explanation of Thales, and began the scientific investigation of electricity. At first they divided bodies into electrical and non-electrical. Some skeptic doubted this, and found that, upon insulation, non-electrical became electrical bodies, and this division was given up. A few years ago it was supposed that bodies were divisible into magnetic and diamagnetic solely according to their constitution. Tyndall was skeptical as to that's being a sufficient explanation, and by experiment found that homogeneity and density had much to do with the matter.

It used to be supposed that the different *forces* of nature were distinct and separate; heat, motion, light, and the rest, but Bunsen was a skeptic on the point, and he, and Liebig, and Faraday, and Tyndall, and Helmholtz, and Mayer, and Carpenter, and Grove, and Youmans, and others succeeded in demonstrating the great principle of the correlation of forces and the conservation of energy.

This scientific skepticism has plenty of room yet. It is laid down in our text-books on Natural Philosophy that 32° Fahrenheit is the freezing point of

water, and that water once frozen gets no colder, but let a skeptic pass a winter in one of the Dakotas, where they pile up ice at the sides of houses for washing purposes, and go out some morning, with the thermometer from 30° to 40° below zero, and pick up a cake of this ice and have it stick to his hand like a piece of frosty iron; let him bring this piece into the house and plunge it into a pail of water and hear it hiss like a hot iron, and crack all through, and he may doubt if this ice be no colder than 32°; may also be led to doubt whether there is not a point in cold beyond which even ice ceases to expand, and again contracts, and thus cracks from expansion when put into water. Some better scientific skeptic than I am may yet follow out such observations with experiments which shall render necessary the revision of some paragraphs of our text-books on Physics.

You remember that famous old scientific puzzle of why a jar of water weighed no more with a fish in it than it did before the fish was put in, and how many learned treatises were written to explain the marvel. It was a skeptic who weighed the jar with and without the fish and found that the addition of the fish's weight made just that difference in the total weight. Then that subject was exhausted for the treatise makers.

Few discoveries are made by chance, and when they are it is the skeptic's brain which turns them to account.

It is this same inquiring, reflective, doubting character of mind which has made all progress possible. The savage went for no one knows how long with only rude stone implements. Finally is produced a skeptic, who sees crude copper melted in the fire, or discovers that it can be beaten into shape, and straightway he doubts whether the stone hatchet of his ancestors be the best possible weapon, and with that skepticism comes a step upward for the tribe.

We might look at the growth of our social institutions and find the same record; a record of discontent with existing conditions; of skepticism of established limitations; of faith and hope toward something else and better.

How is it in religion? How about the kind of skepticism which Mr. Crerar meant? Whence came the belief which John Crerar himself held? How came his personal belief to be any broader than that of Calvin and his day—if it was any broader? Only by the skepticism and "skeptical trash" which forced upon his church a modification of the grim old tenets of Presbyterianism. What has made it possible for Dr. McCosh to proclaim a belief in evolution but the assaults of skeptics upon the old traditions! Why did the New York Presbytery, the other day, by a vote of 47 to 16, adopt an overture to the next general assembly of the Presbyterian Church, asking for a revision of the creed? Simply that the "skeptical trash" has permeated into the ranks of its ministry. Only men like Dr. Shedd, who, in the preface to his recent "DOGMATIC THEOLOGY," says he has found little help from any religious writers later than the middle ages, can to-day hold to these old tenets. Why did not John Crerar believe in the good old orthodox Presbyterian doctrine of infant damnation—if indeed he did not, but for the revolution in religious thought caused by skepticism; by skeptics outside, and, perhaps, by skeptics inside the fold, who dared to doubt the teachings of an Edwards, and the logic of the church on the doctrine of election! What made Protestantism but the skeptics who dared to question whether the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church were infallible, and sovereign dictators in the realm of religious faith? Whence came Presbyterianism itself but from the skeptic Calvin, who dared to doubt the faith in which he had been reared, the teachings of the church in which he had taken holy orders? It was the skeptic Luther, who, after long con-

flict with his doubts, jumped to his feet from the stairs he was climbing on his bare knees, as penance, saying, "man is saved by faith, and not by works," and who flooded all Europe with his "skeptical trash." And Christianity itself was founded by the skeptic Jesus, who dared to say: "It was said to them of old time" one way, "but I say unto you" another, and who suffered death upon the cross for his skepticism and his faith.

The skeptics? They are our prophets; and, as Jesus said, we stone them to death in one age, and build their monuments in the next one.

To skepticism we owe the open Bible, the right of individual investigation, and whatever of hope, and of comfort, and of cheer our civilization possesses to-day. But for skepticism we should still be believing that the earth was a flat plain, with the sun, moon, and stars revolving about it, and a big cistern hanging over it, and it is not due to skepticism that there lurks anywhere in our civilization a belief that it was made in six days. And all this wider outlook means much to us religiously, as I pointed out in my discourse on "The Scientific Bearing of Religion." But for skepticism, we should to-day all be counting our beads, and letting some one else do our thinking on the most important concerns of the soul; yes, be offering meat to idols, and bowing down to the work of man's hands; yea, verily, be trusting to the fetishes, and the charms of the South Sea islander.

I have traced from John Crerar's position backward. How is it, if I go in the other direction? The skepticism which he feared *will* spread, if all allowed to, where the tenets of his church would have made no impression. How then? Is it a chance that Spencer, Tyndall, Huxley, and other noted scientists are not orthodox? Yet these are the names which stand for much of the scientific development and progress of the day. Is it a chance that Holmes, Whittier, Lowell, are not orthodox? I do not know an American writer, acknowledged to be in the front rank, who belongs to the Presbyterian church to-day, with all its education. Is this a chance? Or is it that these skeptical tendencies do still lead, are ever leading to higher ground in life?

I can well remember how, in my youth (and I am not yet old), in my course at the leading Presbyterian College of this country, the books containing the inspiring thought of this century were treated. It was not so much that they were openly assailed, as that they were neglected. When they were mentioned, it was in a way to make us wonder that such false and foolish reasoning should make any stir at all in the world, and tended to make us think them not worth our perusal. We gathered, in the main, that the leading scientists were actuated by malice against Christianity, and were prostituting their strong intellects in manufacturing evidence to support their theories, which were cunningly devised for that purpose. Emerson was represented as a wild Transcendental visionary, hard to get any meaning from, and a plain intimation was given that he didn't know himself what he meant. I remember thinking of him in his old age, and approaching death, and inwardly shuddering, as I wondered what would become of him in the next world, with his sad, even if honest, heresies. I now believe that our professors were not posted in the works of these writers whom they affected to overthrow. By some chance, the authorities placed in the chair of Physics, a year before I graduated, a man posted in recent scientific thought, and the stimulus of his freedom made it forever impossible for me to henceforth accept the Calvinistic theory of the universe. But I understand that he was checked in his utterances, and taught his place. All this was not very many years ago, and I doubt not that to-day the same tactics are pursued, and, in a large degree, the teaching is the same. My

friends, we do not appreciate what a large portion of our neighbors are totally unacquainted with what to us is common knowledge, and which, we sometimes imagine, is the common heritage of our English civilization. We do not appreciate the number of John Crerars there are among us, until such general editorial endorsement as was given this clause of his will, arouses, for the moment, our attention to the fact. "One-half the world does not know how the other half lives?" We do not know how our nearest neighbors live. We are like streams of oil and water. We flow together, side by side, and yet we mingle not.

"We stand on either side the sea;
Stretch hands, throw kisses, lean,
I towards you, you towards me,
But what hears either, save the keen
Gray sea between?"

I met last year, at Harvard, a New England man born and bred, a college graduate, and a graduate of the Boston Law School, who, like myself, had abandoned the law for the Unitarian ministry; and he told me that, although surrounded by Unitarianism all his life, he had known nothing of it, until chance threw him into the church of James Freeman Clarke, and then he said: "If this be Unitarianism, then am I a Unitarian."

We do not appreciate, as we should, the meaning of such a provision as that one of Crerar's will, which I have made my text to-day. We do not at all fully appreciate the extent to which such opinions, such commendation as the press gave this, do influence, do bolster up decaying superstitions; do not realize how effective such methods often are, whatever may be the effect of this one on the proposed public library.

Such things as these arouse me to the sense of duty we owe, as possessors of some light, not to hide that light under a bushel. Can we not do something to propagate our faith? Shall we let men like my Harvard friend go for years not knowing that he could fellowship anywhere? There must be many who *never* find out what he at last found out, but who *could* if we felt our duty in this direction. Let us do good and communicate, and especially to such as are *not* of the household of faith.

Outside of all question of human growth and advancement, do you stop to think of the heartaches caused by the old creeds in which so many yet believe? Do you ever stop to think of the mother who sorrows over the untimely death of her wayward boy, the widow over her unrepentant husband,—dead, and out of the fold? She can no longer *pray* for him. He is beyond the reach of prayer. She cannot smother the hope that somehow he *may* be saved, but what has she to base it on? And the agonizing *doubt* will recur again and again, through all the years of her embittered life. Verily, the trashiest skepticism ever written did never give such pangs as this—not of itself.—If I were possessed of a fortune, and, with the benevolence of a John Crerar, desired to leave money to found a public library, I should be tempted, did I let my Scotch blood rise, to insert a provision like this: "And I desire that all *theological* trash be excluded from this library."

Is it necessary that I say that skepticism is not inconsistent with an abiding faith? The names of some of the leading skeptics I have mentioned saves that necessity. The greatest skeptics have had, also, generally the greatest faith, express or implied; they are skeptics because they see something larger, better, grander than the things which they deny.

There may be too much skepticism, of a certain kind, possible, but I do not believe the danger comes from that in our country to-day. Rather the reverse. There is such prevalent skepticism because there is so much that *ought* to be doubted. It takes a good deal of skepticism to change it. We still have enough like the monks in Galileo's time, who refused to look at the moons of Jupiter through his telescope, lest

they also should become converted to his heresies; too many relics of the sort who, to ward off lightning, would put a cross sprinkled with holy water, and blessed by an incantation against the Devil, on a church, instead of a lightning rod.

Give us more "skeptical trash." I would to God there were to-day, in the libraries of our Theological Seminaries, more works of skeptical merit, and fewer books of Dogmatic Theology trash; less of Hodge and Shedd, and more of Darwin and Haeckel; less of Dorner and Christlieb, and more of Hegel and Schleiermacher; yes, more even of Schopenhauer. Even Tom Paine's "Age of Reason," and Ingersoll's "An Honest God's the Noblest Work of Man," would be a relief to "Dick's Theology," and the "Commentary on Genesis," by the Rev. Dr. Melancthon W. Jacobus, I suspect. I do not mean to disparage the church writers for what of good they may have contributed, and I do not forget that many of them were skeptics of their time, but let us not limit ourselves by their limitations.

All hail to the skeptics, from Giordano Bruno to Robert G. Ingersoll!

4. Do religious *expression* and *association* increase our spiritual power?

5. How can we make our religion the deepest reality of our lives?

VI. SINCERITY AND CONVENTIONALITY.

1. The use and abuse of conventionality.

2. The relation of expediency and policy to principle—where they may harmonize, and where they must be antagonistic.

3. What is the basis of true courtesy?

4. Can we practice absolute sincerity in our social relations?

5. May we ever sacrifice truth to love?

VII. ELEMENTS OF HAPPINESS.

1. Activity a means of happiness.

2. The happiness possible where activity is denied.

3. Happiness possible even in uncongenial routine.

4. May happiness be independent of environment?

5. Have we a right to pursue happiness as an end?

6. Is it always true that the good are happy?

7. The happiness that may become blessedness.

The Study Table.

An Introduction to the study of Shakespeare.
By Hiram Corson, L. L. D., Boston; D. C. Heath & Co.

The contents of Prof. Corson's book are of a varied character, being both explanatory and critical, yet all bearing on the main object of the work announced in the title. There is a chapter on the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy, in which the author takes the to us very just ground that there is nothing in the character and nature of the great essayist to warrant the supposition that he could have written the plays of Shakespeare, even were it proved that the present acknowledged writer had nothing to do with them.

"That Bacon was one of the most august of human intellects is freely conceded. But vast as is the range of powers exhibited in his works there is no evidence in them that he possessed the kind of powers required for the composition of the Shakespeare plays. The evidence is of the strongest kind that he was strangely deficient in such powers. His spirituality appears to have been in inverse proportion to his intellectual power, and his intellectual power was not of a creative order." Following this is a chapter on "The Authenticity of the First Folio," "The Chronology of the Plays," "Shakespeare's Verse," etc. Two-thirds of the volume and more is taken up with commentaries on special characters which the reader will find both interesting and valuable. The table of contents announces a list of "Examination Questions," covering nearly twenty pages in the final chapter, but the volume does not contain it, either through the printer's mistake or author's oversight.

C. P. W.

PROF. MAX MUELLER gave the first course in the "Gifford Lectureship" at Glasgow, in 1888. This lectureship was established by Lord Gifford, for "promoting, advancing, diffusing and teaching the study of natural theology." These lectures have now been published. In one of them the Professor gives the following suggestive definition of religion: "It consists in the perception of the infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man."

THREE words sum up the highest results of modern thought. The word spoken by the church is Christ. The word of science is Evolution. The word of humanity is the Soul.—G. S. Merriam.

LOVE, or the desire of perfection as the foundation of human happiness, is the true and only motive to moral action.—Charles F. Allen.

MANY while they have preached Christ in their sermons, have read a lecture of Atheism in their practice.—Dr. South.

THOUGHT PROBLEMS FOR OUR WOMEN.

The Religious Study Class Committee of the Women's Western Conference, being convinced of the deep practical and thought value of the following programme of the New York League of Unitarian Women, have asked for its reprint in *UNITY* that it may reach with its stimulus, study classes in the churches and individual women everywhere who may be grateful for such wise guidance of their minds into vital life problems.

FLORENCE HILTON,
Sec'y.

I. PROPORTION IN LIFE.

1. What relative proportion of our time shall we give to Home, to Church, and to social duties?

2. Are we often in danger of setting aside great duties for trivial ones?

3. How can we balance the claims of others, with our duties to ourselves?

4. What underlying principle is there, which will not only harmonize, but inspire all these relationships?

II. THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

1. Education the cultivation of power.

2. Learning to think, versus learning things.

3. How early shall we train our children to share the responsibilities of the home?

4. May children suffer from too much, as well as too little parental attention?

5. How can we best bring home to children the natural and spiritual lessons of their own experience?

III. SOCIAL ETHICS.

1. Woman's place and duty toward the ethical questions of the hour.

2. What are the responsibilities of women toward those who serve them?

3. What are their responsibilities toward the masses who labor?

4. What may women with wealth do, individually, to change the false position of labor?

5. What should be expected of those without money?

6. What of the workwoman herself?

7. What associated effort can we bring to bear on these evils?

IV. UNITARIANISM.

1. Unitarianism, its beginning and growth; its distinctive doctrines and aims.

2. What have been its defects, and why?

3. Its constructive power.

4. Its possible future.

5. What is the call of the hour to Unitarian women?

V. PERSONAL RELIGION.

1. What is Belief? What is Religion?

2. How may our Religion glorify the "trivial round, the common task?"

3. What are the greatest aids to spiritual development?

The Home.

"BOB WHITE!"

Those clinging, yellow curls
Are a little girl's,
And they look like sunshine there
Round her face so fair;
What a sweet surprise
Lights her lifted eyes
As she listens to the tale
Of a hidden quail,
Telling her in thankful mood,
"God's good! God's good!"
Till the quiet, leafy wood
Echoes softly "God's good!"

'Neath that briar drooping down,
Near the little maiden's gown,
Is a warm brown mother-breast
Brooding o'er a sheltered nest;
Childish fingers over-much
Long to touch,
And the shy bird leaves her eggs,
Feeling safer on her legs,
But refuses to depart,
Standing near with faithful heart,
While her mate reminds her there,
"God's good! God's good!"
Calls it through the genial air,
"God's good! God's good!"

Now the whistler makes a pause.
And the tender child withdraws;
Straight the tiny hen
Seeks her nest again,
Spreads her brooding wing
While the blue eyes, wondering,
Rest upon the sacred spot;
—Ne'er will be forgot
That message clear and sweet
Borne athwart the wheat,
"God's good! God's good!"
As the little feet
Beat their quick retreat,
"God's good! God's good!"
Making all the day complete,
"God's good! God's good!"

MARIAN LISLE.

NAN AND I.

"Nan and I are cousins. We live in a little village in Vermont. Nan's parents are dead; so she lives with us, and I love her as well as if she were my sister. I haven't any sister, you know, only two great rough brothers; so you can imagine that she was pretty welcome to me when she came. I want to tell you about an adventure we had one day. We often have adventures; but this was an uncommon kind of one, —one with a good ending, and our adventures don't always have good endings.

"Well, one day we started to visit a friend of ours who lives a long way from us, and we had to go through the woods. We were about half way there, when all at once we heard a noise like groaning. We both stopped, and I said, 'Let's run back.' But Nan said, 'No; we'll see what the noise is first.' So we looked all around, and by and by we came across an old lady sitting under a tree, rocking back and forth, groaning and wringing her hands like everything. Nan wasn't a bit afraid; but she pushed me ahead and whispered,—

"'You speak to her, Nelly; you can do it gentler than I can.' So I went up to her and said,—

"'Dear old lady, what makes you feel so badly?' She hadn't heard us before; but now she looked up at us and said,—

"'O dearies! I am sick and tired, and I've lost my way, and I don't know what to do.' And then she commenced groaning again.

"'Where were you going?' Nan asked her.

"'To Blakeville, to my daughter's,' said the old lady. 'Do you know her? —Hulda Ramsey, right side o' the schoolhouse.'

"'Oh, yes!' cried Nan. 'We know her very well. Now, if it was only a few hours later, we could go with you and show you the way.'

"Here she stopped and looked at me, and I looked back at her. We both knew what the other was thinking of; but we didn't want to do it a bit—what we were thinking of, I mean. But by and by I looked at her again and nodded, and she nodded back; and I said,—

"'We'll go with you Mrs. — but we don't know your name. We are Nannie and Nelly Bradford.'

"'My name is Mrs. Selina Mann,' she said; 'and I am ever so much obliged to you, dears, for helping a poor tired old woman.'

"Well, she talked to us all the way home about Hulda and the children, and about her son's family,—where she came from, and how she had thought she could find the way easily enough from W— to Blakeville, but how soon she lost herself, and wandered on and on, not knowing whether she was right or wrong, and at last how she gave up in despair. Nan and I tried to be interested in all she said, though we couldn't help thinking sometimes what a nice time we had expected to have at Susie Lund's that afternoon.

"When we left Mrs. Mann at her daughter's, she thanked us over and over again, and told us she should never forget us, and we must come and see her real often. We promised, and then we went home. Mamma was surprised to see us so early; but she approved of what we had done, and said we might go to Susie's Saturday afternoon. Well, we did, and had a splendid time.

"Our old lady didn't forget us, and one day she sent for us to come over; and what do you suppose she had for us? Why, two of the prettiest little writing-desks you ever saw. She said they were to write to her on after she had gone home. So every once in a while we send her little notes, and she is very much pleased with them.

"Brother Tom laughs at us, and says we 'entertained an angel unawares;' but we didn't, only a nice old lady. Nan and I have never been sorry for that adventure, and I hope another time we wouldn't even stop to think whether we wanted to do right or not, but do it right off without thinking. Nan is calling me to supper, so good-by."

Young Pilgrim.

The Newest Books.

All books sent to UNITY for review will be promptly acknowledged under this heading, and all that seem to be of special interest to the readers of UNITY will receive further notice. Any book in print will be mailed on receipt of price by the publishers of UNITY, CHARLES H. KERR & CO., 175 Dearborn st., Chicago.

One Merry Christmas Time. Hurrah for the New Year—1890. A Happy New Year to You.—Printed in colors. Rings, ribbon and chain. 75 cents each.

Osborne of Arrochar.—By Amanda M. Douglas. Boston: Lee & Shepard. Chicago: S. A. Maxwell & Co. Cloth, 12mo., pp. 449. Price \$1.50.

Manual of Empirical Psychology as an instructive science. By Dr. Gustav Adolf Lindner. Authorized translation by Charles De Garmo. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co. Cloth, 16mo., pp. xiii, 274. \$1.10.

Interlinear Greek-English Gospel of Luke: Sunday-school Lessons for 1890. Chicago: Albert & Scott. 16mo., paper, 25 cents, cloth, 50 cents.

A General History for Colleges and High Schools. By P. V. N. Myers. Boston: Ginn & Co. Half leather, pp. x, 759.

The Sailing of King Olaf, and Other Poems.—By Alice Williams Brotherton. A ballad founded on the old Norse legend, with seventy-two other poems of great variety as to subject. Cloth, square 18mo; handsomely bound, with full-page illustration in gilt on the cover. 145 pages. 50 cents.

The poem which gives the book its title is well known, while the others, all short pieces, are not only musical but full of thought and delicious fancy.—*Philadelphia Record*.

"The Sailing of King Olaf," the poem which gives the book its title, is a finely treated Norse legend, and the "Rose Songs" are very light and dainty, showing great delicacy of imagination and sportive play of fancy.—*New Orleans Times-Democrat*.

There is no want of variety in these poems; in subject, treatment and metre a pleasing change is constantly made. There are some which satisfy us with a single reading, while others we re-read with pleasure, retaining a few in permanent friendship.—*Providence Sunday Telegram*.

We can not recall another book of recent poetry of anything like the same dimensions that has an equal diversity. It is the work of a real poet, and one who has at times a daring inspiration.—*Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*.

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CHICAGO CALENDAR.

CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH.—Corner Michigan avenue and Twenty-third street. David Utter, minister. Services at 10:45 A. M.

UNITY CHURCH.—Corner Dearborn avenue and Walton place. Thomas G. Milsted, minister. Sunday services at 10:45 A. M.

THIRD UNITARIAN CHURCH.—Corner Monroe and Laflin streets. James Vila Blake, minister. Sunday services at 11:00 A. M. Sunday, Dec. 15, Mr. Blake will preach, subject, "Faithfulness." Sunday-school at 10:00 A. M.

ALL SOULS CHURCH.—Corner Oakwood boulevard and Langley avenue. Jenkins Lloyd Jones, minister. Sunday morning services at 11:00. Sunday-school at 9:30 A. M. Emerson section of Unity Club Monday evening, Dec. 16. Philosophy section, Tuesday evening Dec. 17. Teachers' meeting every Friday evening at 7:45.

UNITY CHURCH, Hinsdale.—Herbert Taft Root, minister. Sunday services at 10:45 A. M.

HOLLAND LIBERAL RELIGIOUS SOCIETY, Curran Hall, 350 Blue Island ave., near 14th street. Rev. John R. Effinger, will preach Sunday evening, Dec. 15, at 7:30. Sunday-school at 2:30 P. M.

DOUGLAS PARK.—Rev. John R. Effinger, secretary of the Western Conference, will preach at 11 A. M., Sunday, Dec. 15.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

THE WESTERN CONFERENCE ENDOWMENT FUND.

Amount previously acknowledged in UNITY, Nov. 30-----	\$ 15,345
Mrs. M. M. Crunden, St. Louis, (additional)-----	25
Dr. and Mrs. H. S. P. Lare, St. Louis-----	5
Total,-----	\$15,375

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CHRISTMAS BOOKS.

THE time is close by when UNITY readers will be making their annual holiday purchases of books. We ask their especial attention to our announcements in this and other volumes of UNITY. The book business and the publication of UNITY are carried on by us together, so that any increase in our sales of books is a direct help to the paper.

Most of UNITY's subscriptions expire next March, or in about three months. All whose subscriptions end then, will do well to take advantage of a year's renewal and five dollars worth of books, prepaid for \$5.00 cash with order.

AN EXQUISITE holiday gift is the beautiful padded calf edition of "The Thought of God," by Frederick L. Hosmer and William C. Gannett. This book of poems is too well known to UNITY readers to need any description. Of the fine edition we have on hand just eight copies, being all that the publishers had in this form. Their price for the edition was \$3.00, our price is \$2.50. We have also the cloth edition at \$1.00, and the paper edition at 50 cents. Note that no more of the calf edition will be obtainable this year than the eight copies on hand, so that those wishing to secure them must order early.

OTHER less expensive books of poetry suitable for gift books are "The Sailing of King Olaf and Other Poems," by Alice Williams Brotherton, cloth, full gilt, 50 cents; "Wind Flowers," by Luella D. Smith, a handsome book of 235 pages, mostly translations from the German, 50 cents; "Echoes from the Blarney Stone," a bright collection of Irish dialect verses, 60 cents; James Vila Blake's Poems, \$1.00; Benjamin S. Parker's Cabin in the Clearing, \$1.50. All these are neatly bound in cloth.

THE very latest book in the form of fiction is "From Over the Border," which the New

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LIBERTY AND LIFE, the new book by E. P. Powell, author of "Our Heredity from God," has been delayed in the printing but will soon be out, in ample time for the holidays. It will contain seventeen discourses, making 208 12mo. pages. Price for cloth edition, 75 cents. Order now and receive the book at once on publication, about Dec. 10. The paper edition of "Liberty and Life" will not be sold at any price but will be given to any UNITY subscriber sending us a new name for a year with \$1.00 before Jan. 1.

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